



State of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

****NEWS RELEASE****

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, October 19, 2005

DPI 2005-138

CONTACT: Joseph Donovan, Communications Officer
(608) 266-3559/joseph.donovan@dpi.state.wi.us

Wisconsin scores above national average on mathematics and reading survey assessments

NAEP administered to small sample of state students

MADISON—State students who took mathematics and reading tests that were part of the 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) survey of student achievement scored above national averages in both subjects.

“The biennial NAEP state assessments showed once again that Wisconsin students demonstrate solid academic performance,” said State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster. “Our overall math and reading scores were above national averages and generally consistent with previous NAEP assessments.”

The report for mathematics showed Wisconsin students earning scale scores of 241 in fourth grade, compared to 237 for the nation. The state scale score was higher than average scale scores for math in 2003 (237). For eighth-grade mathematics, the average scale score was 285, compared to 278 for the nation. The score was statistically the same as the score in 2003 (284). In reading, fourth-graders earned a scale score of 221, compared to 217 for the nation. At eighth-grade reading, the average scale score was 266, compared to 260 for the nation. The state scale scores for reading were not significantly different from the scores in 2003 for both grades (fourth 221 and eighth 266).

“In the past two years, Wisconsin had the highest growth rate in poverty of all 50 states,” Burmaster said. “Our schools are experiencing the highest levels of poverty in more than a decade,

(more)

2005 NAEP	Grade 4		Grade 8	
	State	Nation	State	Nation
Mathematics	241	237	285	278
Reading	221	217	266	260

with 14 percent of Wisconsin's children coming from economically disadvantaged families. We know poverty is a challenge to student achievement."

The NAEP assessments are administered to a sample of students in each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Department of Defense Schools. In Wisconsin, 5,180 fourth-graders and 5,016 eighth-graders took the 2005 mathematics and reading assessments during the six-week testing window that ended in March. Wisconsin enrolls more than 850,000 students in its public schools.

The 2005 NAEP mathematics assessment consisted of 10 sections of 25 minutes each for both fourth and eighth grades with each student taking two sections of the test. Each fourth-grader answered between 28 and 40 questions; eighth-graders between 32 and 42 questions. The fourth-grade reading test had 10 sections of 25 minutes each with students taking two sections, reading passages that ranged in length from 250 to 800 words. At eighth grade, the reading assessment consisted of 12 sections of 25 minutes and one 50-minute section. Passages ranged in length from 400 to 1,000 words. NAEP assessments were all administered at the same time, meaning each student took just one subject-area assessment.

"The NAEP assessments provide a snapshot of student achievement, and results, for the most part, are what we find on other large-scale assessments," Burmaster said. "We must continue our efforts to provide educational programming that works—early learning opportunities, smaller class sizes, and quality teachers in every classroom—to close the achievement gap for economically disadvantaged students, children of color, and their peers."

###

ATTACHMENT: Tables with additional information about Wisconsin's achievement on the 2005 National Assessment of Education Progress mathematics and reading assessments follow.

2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress

Scale Scores

	Mathematics			
	Grade 4		Grade 8	
	State	Nation	State	Nation
Overall	241	237	285	278
African-American	210	220	246	254
American Indian	--	227	--	266
Asian	236	251	286	294
Hispanic	224	225	265	261
White	247	246	291	288
Disadvantaged	225	225	263	261
Not Disadvantaged	249	248	292	288

	Reading			
	Grade 4		Grade 8	
	State	Nation	State	Nation
Overall	221	217	266	260
African-American	194	199	236	242
American Indian	--	205	--	251
Asian	226	227	262	270
Hispanic	208	201	247	245
White	227	228	271	269
Disadvantaged	204	203	249	247
Not Disadvantaged	230	230	272	270

-- Sample size insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

	Mathematics			
	Grade 4		Grade 8	
	State	Nation	State	Nation
Students with Disabilities	221	218	250	244
Nondisabled	243	240	289	281
English-Language Learners	225	216	269	244
Non-ELL	242	239	285	280

	Reading			
	Grade 4		Grade 8	
	State	Nation	State	Nation
Students with Disabilities	189	190	230	226
Nondisabled	225	220	270	264
English-Language Learners	202	187	--	224
Non-ELL	222	220	267	263

-- Sample size insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.